



Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

617 349 4683, Fax 617 349 3116, E-mail histcomm@ci.cambridge.ma.us

Allen Razdow, *Chair*, James Freeman, *Vice Chair*, Sally Zimmerman, *Secretary*

Howard Medwed, Barbara Norfleet, Jo Solet, *Members*

Jacqueline Olds, Louise Sullivan, Karin Weller, *Alternates*

As owner of the property at _____, Cambridge, Massachusetts, I hereby make application to the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Commission for issuance of a Certificate of () Appropriateness, () Non-applicability, () Hardship for the alteration, construction, or demolition described below:

Name of Record Owner: _____

Address of Record Owner: _____

Signature: _____ Telephone: _____

Application made on behalf of: _____

(if applicable)

SEE REVERSE FOR COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS

For Office Use Only:

Received: _____ *Date of Hearing(s):* _____ *Date of Certificate:* _____

Case Number: _____ *Withdrawn:* _____ *Continued:* _____

I. Complete entire section.

Is the property: listed on the National Register of Historic Places? _____ Publicly owned? _____

Current Zoning : _____

Current Use: _____

Does the property contain a use established or continued by special permit or variance or proposed to contain or continue a use that would require a variance or special permit under the zoning ordinance now in effect? _____

Will this project require: variance _____ special permit _____

If yes, nature of zoning relief sought: setback _____ FAR _____ height _____ parking _____

Will this project require issuance of a demolition permit, other than for a structure originally built to house automobiles? _____

II. Complete applicable sections.

1. New Construction, Construction of Accessory Building, or Construction of Addition:

_____ Gross Floor Area of Proposed Construction

_____ Gross Floor Area of Existing Construction

_____ Existing Total Lot Coverage*

_____ Proposed Total Lot Coverage*

*Office Use Only: Increase
in Gross Floor Area _____*

*Office Use Only: Increase
in Total Lot Coverage* _____*

* Total Lot Coverage is defined as the combined square footage of the footprints of all structures on the premises whether or not those structures constitute floor area as defined in the zoning ordinance in effect

2. Alterations: Does this project include:

_____ the increase or diminishment of the existing building envelope, including covered porches or decks over 2.5' above grade;

_____ the removal, enclosure or addition of any cornice, fascia, soffit, bay, porch, hood, cornerboard, window sash, window or door casing, or any other decorative element, including historic shingled siding, wood or copper gutters and downspouts, and copper, slate or wood shingle roofing;

_____ the construction of terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks, and similar structures that involve a change in grade level, and that are to be used for parking between the street and the principal front wall plane of a building, or the principal front and side wall planes of a building occupying a corner property;

_____ the construction of walls and fences greater than four feet in height as measured from the sidewalk or the existing immediately adjacent grade and located between the street and the principal front wall plane of a building or the front and side wall planes of a building occupying a corner property; or construction of walls and fences greater than six feet high elsewhere on the property; or,

_____ construction in an accessory building that would create new floor area.

Instructions for Completing This Application

This application should be filed at the offices of the Cambridge Historical Commission, which staffs the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Commission, before any proposed work on a property in the district begins. It should be accompanied by the required materials listed below. Filing deadlines for applications may be obtained by contacting the Cambridge Historical Commission at 617 349 4683 (fax: 617 349 3116; or histcomm@cambridge.ci.ma.us). Contact the Commission staff to determine which of two administrative procedures will be required. Incomplete applications cannot be scheduled for Commission consideration.

If the application is subject to **binding review**, a public hearing will be scheduled for the next available regularly-scheduled meeting of the Commission. If the application is subject to **non-binding, or advisory, review**, the application will be scheduled for the next available regularly-scheduled meeting of the Commission or for a special meeting held within fourteen days of the filing of a completed application, whichever comes first, and applicants will be notified of the manner in which they are to post notice of that meeting. **Owners should plan to attend all meetings at which their applications will be considered.** Owners having professional consultants, such as architects, contractors, landscape architects, engineers, or attorneys, are urged to have them attend as well. Applications must be signed by the record owner of the property. The Commission staff welcomes advance inquiries for interpretation of the order or advice on the content of a proposal.

Plans submitted with applications are incorporated into approved Certificates. Subsequent changes to approved plans may require additional review and approval and are undertaken at the applicant's risk.

Application Requirements for Binding or Non-Binding Review

1. Completed application form with a written description of the work to be done, including all pertinent information of which you think the Commission should be aware
2. Plot plan of existing site, including a dimensioned footprint of all existing buildings, parking areas, and driveways and indicating compass orientation
3. Plot plan of proposed site, including a dimensioned footprint of all proposed construction, parking areas, driveways, fence lines, and landscaping. Indicate removal of mature trees.
4. Assessor's plan of the area showing existing structures and footprint of all proposed new construction
5. Detailed, dimensioned elevations and floor plans for any proposed construction, including rendering of window treatment and schedule of materials
6. Dimensional Form (as found in the Board of Zoning Appeal's variance application)

For binding review of new construction and additions to existing structures, the following must also be submitted:

7. Sun and shadow study (winter and summer solstice, AM and PM)
8. Streetscape elevation at 1/8th scale showing relative heights and distances of the surrounding buildings in comparison with any proposed new construction

Statement of Principles, Standards, and Guidelines for Review

(taken from Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Order, 6/15/98)

The Commission shall apply certain principles, standards, and guidelines for review in addition to those contained in Article 2.78.220 A. and B. [Cambridge City Code] in considering applications for certificates of appropriateness, non-applicability or hardship.

A. Principles of Review

The Commission recognizes the capacity of certain properties in the District for additional development under applicable provision of the zoning code and affirms its consideration of proposed additions and alteration to such properties consistent with the terms of this order. The Commission seeks to achieve consensus determinations based on the available historical record, recommendations from members, alternates and staff, and comments from applicants and abutters and consistent with the terms of this order. The Commission affirms its role as a technical advisor to applicants on issues of conservation and preservation.

B. General Conservation Standards

All applications shall be considered in terms of the impact of the proposed new construction or alteration, relocation or demolition of an existing building on the District as a whole, and in addition with regard to the potential adverse effects of the proposed construction, alteration, relocation or demolition on the surrounding properties and on the immediate streetscape. General conservation standards shall be to:

1. Conserve the historic development patterns of the neighborhood, including its green space, open vistas, generous setbacks, and predominately low density lot coverage;
2. Enhance the pedestrian's visual enjoyment of the neighborhood's buildings, landscapes and structures;
3. Protect structures listed on or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;
4. Encourage the preservation of the neighborhood's buildings, landscapes, and structures;
5. Maintain the diversity of the neighborhood's architectural styles.

C. Conservation Guidelines for Avon Hill

The following guidelines establish the conservation principles to be encouraged within any given application.

1. Infill Construction and Additions: In the A-2 zone, infill construction (including accessory buildings) and additions shall not cause total lot coverage to exceed 30%; in the B and C-1 zones, infill construction and additions should not cause total lot coverage to exceed 40%. In addition to considering streetscape impacts of infill construction and additions, vistas into and through the site from surrounding public ways should be conserved. Impacts on significant landscape features and mature plantings should be minimized. Additions should be compatible with the architectural character of the principal building and its surroundings, should be sited away from principal elevations, and should respect the cornice height of the original building.

2. Parking: Where parking between the principal front wall plane of a building and the street is proposed, curb cuts and square footage of paved area devoted to parking should be minimized. Paving in permeable materials is encouraged. Low fencing, low walls, and plant material to screen parking areas are encouraged.

3. Fences: Fences should be low and transparent to conserve vistas into and through properties and to enable the pedestrian's visual access to the character of the district. The desire for enclosing private spaces should be balanced against the historically-open character of vistas in the district. Fences needed for privacy should enclose the minimum area necessary to achieve their intent and should leave a portion of the premises open to view from the public way. Where safe and appropriate, privacy fences should be set back behind a planting bed to avoid creating a vertical plane directly on the public way.